



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Office of the Mayor

PROPOSED NORTHGATE LEGISLATION

Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel

Cover Letter for Proposed Ordinance

June 17, 2004

June 15, 2004

Honorable Jan Drago
President
Seattle City Council
City Hall, 2nd Floor

Dear Council President Drago:

I am pleased to transmit the attached proposed Council Bill recommending amendments to the 2004 Budget for the Seattle Public Utilities Drainage and Wastewater Fund to provide funding for the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel Project at Northgate.

This transmittal responds to legislation that the City Council approved in December 2003, which included the Northgate Mall Development Agreement that provides the City a 12-month option to purchase 2.7 acres of the Northgate South Lot, and City Council Resolution 30642 requesting that Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) evaluate and recommend one of three specified options for natural drainage and open space for the Northgate South Lot. The three options include: 1) daylighting storm flows in the conveyance pipe under the Northgate South Lot, 2) constructing a series of natural system swales to treat drainage from the adjacent neighborhood, and 3) constructing a hybrid (Hybrid), which involves diverting dry weather flows and flows from frequent storm events from the conveyance pipe at NE 100th Street and 3rd Avenue NE to a surface channel for water quality treatment.

I am pleased to recommend the Hybrid option for the proposed Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel Project. The Asset Management Committee of Seattle Public Utilities approved the Hybrid option based upon, among other factors, a technical evaluation that estimates the Hybrid option provides the most pollutant removal of the options evaluated and provides the most cost-effective pollutant removal rate. This project will provide water quality treatment and infiltration for drainage from the Northgate sub-basin, nearly 10% of the Thornton Creek Watershed, that currently discharges to Thornton Creek relatively unmanaged. In addition, this project will further the Northgate Comprehensive Plan goals by providing 2.7 acres of open space for the Northgate neighborhood that will include key pedestrian connections, landscaping and a water feature with year-round flow. Finally, the proposed Hybrid option was unanimously recommended by the Northgate Stakeholders Group and received strong community support at the May 13th Public Forum.

Three related ordinances are proposed to implement this proposal. The first is an ordinance to exercise the City's option to purchase the 2.7 acres of land, pursuant to the Northgate Mall Development Agreement and authorize the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel Project. This second ordinance, attached, seeks funding for that project. The third ordinance authorizes a memorandum of understanding between Lorig and the City regarding agreements to reconfigure their respective parcels and jointly plan and execute their respective projects.

600 Fourth Avenue, 7th Floor, P.O. Box 94749, Seattle, WA 98124-4749

Tel: (206) 684-4000, TDD: (206) 684-8811 Fax: (206) 684-5360, E:mail: mayors.office@seattle.gov

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Thank you for your consideration of this legislation. Implementing the Hybrid option through the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel Project has the opportunity to provide a solution to a long-standing controversy about the best use of this site to improve the health of Thornton Creek and assist in the revitalization of the Northgate neighborhood. Should you have questions, please contact Miranda Maupin at 386-9133.

Sincerely,

GREG NICKELS
Mayor of Seattle

cc: Honorable Members of the Seattle City Council